

Minister's Annual Address 2003

Information
of the Government of the Republic of Poland
on the Polish foreign policy in the year 2003
(delivered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
at the Sejm session of January 22, 2003)

Mr President,

Mr Speaker,

Mr Prime Minister,

Honorable Members,

The last year in our foreign policy which came to an end was marked by a successful conclusion of accession negotiations with the European Union. It was undoubtedly our seminal political and diplomatic success. I would like to seize this opportunity to pay tribute to all politicians, civil servants and experts who have, over the recent years, contributed to the final success.

The successful conclusion of negotiations gives ground for satisfaction to all who understand the significance of our accession to the European Union. It is an event of utmost historic significance. Lofty and exalted words in its assessment are entirely warranted and they were ample. We have created conditions to secure a better, safe, prosperous tomorrow to Poland. The road to the European Union is wide open now. We cannot squander the chance we have been given.

Therefore the soon-to-come membership of the Union is a major reference point in defining the objectives of our policy in the forthcoming months. The priority is the validation of the Accession Treaty which we will sign in April at a summit in Athens. It requires ratification by the European Union member states and obviously by Poland. It is the priority task of the domestic policy of the Government to ensure a positive outcome of the referendum to be held in our country, whereas fostering a climate conducive to ratification decisions in the parliaments of the European Union member states is becoming the most important challenge for our foreign policy. We

hope that the Polish diplomacy will be actively supported by parliamentarians in the fulfillment of this task.

At the same time we will be preparing ourselves for the proper discharging of the membership obligations. We will take on a role of an active observer in the European Union institutions. We will get involved in the cooperation mechanisms accessible to us. We will be ready for membership to the full required extent beginning May 1, 2004.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members,

Membership of the European Union will open a new chapter in our history. Our foreign policy will also acquire a new dimension. Therefore in my exposé this year I would like to slightly depart from the form adhered to so far, for we have to reflect more profoundly upon the Polish policy. We have to look from a new perspective at its numerous aspects. A wider international context also requires this. The new century brings forth a considerable potential for transformations. The historical process, which still in the 1990s was taking place mainly on the East - West axis and was at times bringing to mind the cold-war climate of distrust, has entered an entirely new phase. The events of September 11, 2001 have shifted into the foreground phenomena which had frequently failed to be perceived or appreciated. These are: terrorism, "failed states", proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime. Presently new light has been shed on them and they are perceived as serious threats.

Therefore the international environment changes, and the way it is perceived changes likewise. This concerns among others international security. The old international setting fades away, and the structures originating from it are not always able to live up to the new situation. They urgently need reform. Each country is constantly faced with the necessity of making choice, resolving fundamental dilemmas. The same goes for Poland.

The basic objectives of our policy do not change - ensuring sovereignty, security, the best possible external conditions for the development of the country, protection of the rights of our citizens - what changes are the circumstances.

First and foremost new possibilities appear to pursue these goals. It is up to us whether we are able to capitalize on them. We are acceding to an institution which is one of the leading international players, a collective superpower. Until now we could at best associate ourselves with the position of the Union, from now on - we will co-create it. If we are able to felicitously define our interests and if we are adept at convincing our European Union partners, our capabilities to influence the international setting, including the closest environment, will increase considerably. The voice of the Union will reinforce our message. However, if we succumb to passivity and insularity of our mind-set, we will become a mere cog in the machinery of the common European Union policy. There is no reason for us to have an inferiority complex. We will have the number of votes in the Council of the European Union that is comparable to the number at the disposal of European superpowers.

Honorable Members,

The next few months will be decisive for the future shape of Europe. We will enter a different Europe from the one with which we negotiated, for as our accession changes us, so it will also change Europe.

Along with the process of ratification of the accession treaties, the vision of further integration will unfold. In a few months' time the work of the European Convention will come to a close. The result will be the presentation of a draft of a new constitutional treaty. Currently Polish representatives take an active part in the work of the Convention. It is important, for the results of the work of the Convention, though devoid of founding capacity, guide the further course of thinking in the governmental circles. Shortly thereafter negotiations of the Intergovernmental Conference will start. Their aim will be to formally determine the text of the treaty. We want to participate in these negotiations on an equal basis. They will decide the shape of the European Union whose member we will become. Pursuant to the decisions of the European Council in Copenhagen we will participate in taking decisions on the future institutional solutions even if they are taken prior to our full-fledged membership of the Union. Such a situation is of an unprecedented nature. Never before have the candidate countries had an opportunity of that kind. We cannot allow ourselves to be passive, supine, to show false timidity. After all what is at stake is the definition of the place of Poland in the evolving shape of Europe, which will satisfy our aspirations and which will protect our identity. The participation in the Intergovernmental Conference is one of the fundamental tasks of the Polish foreign policy.

Our Polish internal debate on the future shape of the Union has already led to some major achievements which are presented by our representatives in the Convention. Let us recall that last February the Forum "Together on the future of Europe" under the patronage of the President and the Prime Minister was set in train. Every several weeks meetings and discussions throughout the country were taking place which were devoted to the Polish vision of the future European Union. The activities of the Forum will be continued this year.

The discussion on the future of the European Union conducted in the Convention is aimed at devising a proposal of reforms to confirm and reinforce the edifice which is the foundation of the European Union, which will strengthen the social legitimacy of the European Union institutions, which will create conditions allowing for efficient functioning of the enlarged Union and which will bring the Union closer to its citizens by a fuller application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality and by a far-reaching simplification of the treaty structure. The Polish government speaks out in favor of a reformed European Union as a Union of states and citizens, ensuring the respect of national identity and cultural diversity of all its member states. We also fully share the endeavors aiming at the creation of effective mechanisms of functioning of the enlarged Union, allowing it to face economic and political challenges of the contemporary world. Institutional reforms should aim at strengthening the efficiency of the EU institutions which are of paramount importance to the functioning of the Community. In this way they should ensure - as a fundamental principle - the proper way of pursuing the interests of individual member

states on a par with the interest of the Union as a whole. Such a premise will be the basis of the proposal of institutional solutions that we will co-create and endorse.

We are in favor of including into the Constitutional Treaty of a preamble making reference to a set of principles respected in the European Union, among them the principles of freedom, equality and solidarity. The reference to the sources of moral and philosophical inspiration based upon the wording in the Polish Constitution should also be part of it.

We set store on the anchoring of the principles of democracy and transparency in the pursuit of the EU activities.

In aspiring to have our position acknowledged in the decisions of the future International Conference, we are presently intensifying consultations touching upon this issue with our European partners.

Honorable Members,

We want to make good use of the months ahead in order to create in the international policy the image of Poland as a good, trustworthy participant of the European community. We are not driven by short-sighted motives. It is a strategic choice. Europe is our destiny, it is here that our interests are being decided. We are confident that we can combine this policy skillfully with the special nature of our relations with the United States. We go as far as to believe that they are our trump card in the Union, that they build our position there, that they constitute a lasting achievement of our foreign policy. The state visit of President Aleksander Kwaśniewski last-year charted the long-term directions of development of these relations. The recent political consultations of the President of the Republic of Poland in Washington confirm their new quality. Prime Minister Leszek Miller will soon pay a visit to the USA.

In our relations with the USA we aim at solidifying a mature strategic partnership, sustaining the momentum of political and military relations. Raising Polish-American economic relations to a level on a par with political cooperation remains a challenge to the Polish foreign policy. The focus is to attract such American investments that would facilitate the modernization of our economy. This is especially topical in the context of the decision concerning the choice of the multi-task aircraft for the Polish armed forces. At the same time, the volume of Polish export to the USA is all but satisfactory.

Honorable Members,

We will strive to ensure coherence of the transatlantic community. However, we should get accustomed to the fact that divergences in opinion between Europe and America are a natural phenomenon, they reflect the peculiarity of their respective historical modes of development, geographical locations and roles in the world. Nevertheless, they should not be exaggerated, for the community of fundamental

interests and civilizational values is so strong and resilient that it will mellow the short-lived divergences in opinion. America and Europe share a long agenda of issues to be addressed in the contemporary world and they can implement it only when they join forces. What is more, no-one today should attempt at building the identity of Europe in opposition to the USA. We wish awareness to gain ground that the United States - despite its global activism and commitment in the areas distant from Europe - remains also a "European superpower". We also believe that the Europeans will continue to be perceived by the USA as partners and credible allies, irrespective of political instability, for good and bad.

We are the proponents of strengthening the European foreign policy and the common policy in respect of security and defense, because they create the premises to shape a mature *modus vivendi* of the transatlantic partnership. We treat the European defense policy as complementary to NATO and we intend to actively participate in it. We will take part in operations under the aegis of the European Union, we are interested in its programs referring to the armaments industry. The compatibility of the European defense policy and NATO is best visible against the background of transformations taking place inside NATO.

Honorable Members,

The Prague Summit initiated a thorough transformation of the Transatlantic Alliance. It has substantial consequences for our security whose pillar is the Alliance. NATO recognizes its new identity as a political factor of regional security, and in the future - it should be assumed - also of global security. These changes confirm the *raison d'être* of the Alliance, instill into its members the conviction of its usefulness, render its mission important and topical. It is in line with Polish interests, although the classical functions of NATO as a system of collective defense are becoming relatively less exigent. For Poland the Alliance is an instrument especially precious and irreplaceable and we set store first and foremost on it being an active, efficient instrument, important from the point of view of the interests of its members. Therefore we will endorse the transformation of the Alliance. There could be nothing more hazardous to it than passivity in confrontation with the shrinking of the traditional threats. Likewise, we cannot view our security policy in a static way. We should not think stolidly using the categories of threats that have passed, failing to notice the new ones.

The accession, in the forthcoming months, of seven new members will infuse the Alliance with new energy, will invigorate it, for the states which will be accepted in its ranks need it very much. This is the seal put on the end of the postwar division of Europe, extirpating the consequences of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. The states that enter the Alliance are in geographical proximity to us, we share similar historical experiences, we have similar modes of cognition. We gain two new allies at our borders - Lithuania and Slovakia. Poland has been an unswerving advocate of their membership, which has not been forgotten by those states. All this consolidates our political standing in the Alliance and in the region. Undoubtedly, the decisions taken in Prague are our success.

Presently we will seek to keep the door to NATO open. We support the Atlantic aspirations of the remaining states of the region which want to accede to the alliance. This relates also to Ukraine. Our aim is to make the old geopolitical divisions dissipate completely.

This logic encompasses our support for the pursuit of close relations between the Alliance and Russia. Joint fight against the terrorist menace has become a natural leverage of cooperation.

In Prague decisions reforming the command structure have been taken. They create new defense capabilities preceding the establishment of the NATO's Response Force. We declared our active participation in the creation of new assets and capabilities. It is a tangible way in which we can confirm the vitality of NATO. The value of the Alliance has always been based on the fact that its political mission has been made credible to the full extent by military capabilities.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members,

The accession to the European Union will transform our bilateral relations with the member states. These relations will gain additional space for development. Our diplomatic missions in these countries will work according to different patterns.

In our most immediate neighborhood our key partner among the European Union member states is the Federal Republic of Germany. Our common task is to positively embed the policy of strategic partnership and reconciliation in the new context which is created by our accession to the European Union. We would like it to acknowledge the significance of people-to-people contacts and civic initiatives, cooperation between enterprises in the framework of border-zone and cross-border cooperation, a more comprehensive economic cooperation, dialog between societies and combating stereotypes.

We will make our best to maintain intense political dialog with France, on the governmental as well as inter-parliamentarian level. Our goal is to strengthen the presence of Polish enterprises on the French market through economic promotion and capitalizing on the network of regional ties.

Moreover, we will persuade our partners that the Weimar Triangle has an important role to play after the European Union enlargement. The 2003 Warsaw summit meeting of the Weimar Triangle will serve this goal. One of the stimuli that can add momentum to the cooperation in the framework of the Weimar Triangle would be to shift it more towards dialog and to work out concepts concerning the "Eastern Dimension" of the EU policy.

As far as the close cooperation with Great Britain is concerned, it can be of great use, after Polish accession to the European Union, in fostering the coherence of the transatlantic dimension.

Our accession to the Union will put us closer to its regional dimensions - the Mediterranean cooperation, the Northern Dimension, and in this way it will create an opportunity to intensify our relations with the Mediterranean and Nordic countries.

Still a lot remains to be done in the Balkans in the process of post-conflict rehabilitation. The European Union is taking over the responsible tasks of stabilization in the field of security. It will complement the present - leading role of the Union in the political and economic stabilization in this region. Poland will continue to actively participate in this undertaking. We perceive a need to merge international efforts in a long-term, complex strategy. We cannot let old tensions and complications revive.

We welcome a new impetus that has been given by the Copenhagen decisions to relations between the European Union and Turkey. We hope that a lasting settlement of the Cyprus question will be achieved.

A special place in our policy is occupied by our relations with the Holy See. The papal pilgrimage to Poland last year was an important international event. A profound and topical message of mercy engulfed the world. We can also find in it moral references to international policy.

We are grateful to the Holy Father for the support granted to our endeavors to join the European Union.

Honorable Members,

Unalterably our priority remains regional policy in our nearest surroundings. We would like the region of Central and Eastern Europe to retain its identity and international status after the enlargement of the European Union.

One of the factors conducive to advancing good-neighborly relations and fostering cooperation of Poland with the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Lithuania on a partnership basis are bilateral and multilateral relations on a regional scale. Another will be to act propitiously to ensure the success of the process of ratification of the EU Accession Treaties and the simultaneous entrance into the Union. We will contribute to sustaining the momentum in the development of trade with these countries. We hope that the Lithuanian authorities will respond positively to the substantiated postulates that the Poles living in Lithuania have been putting forward for a long time.

After invitations have been extended to Lithuania and Slovakia to join NATO, Poland will also contribute to the success of the process of ratification of the accession protocol, ensuring the fastest possible membership of the North-Atlantic Alliance to these states.

The multilateral platforms of regional contacts will be used first and foremost to counteract the creation of new divisions after the European Union and NATO enlargements. One of the means serving this goal will be the promotion and development of the Riga Initiative of the President of the Republic of Poland. The

Initiative has become one of the significant aspects of achievements of the Polish foreign policy in the last months.

Adjusting the structures of regional cooperation to a new political quality created by the European Union and NATO enlargements will be a challenge to the Polish foreign policy. A more detailed assessment of the present potential and prospects of cooperation in the framework of the Visegrad Group is urgently needed. Last year we managed to intensify cooperation within this context. One of the factors creating the opportunity for further partnership is cooperation in working out EU policy towards Eastern Europe and the Balkans, sub-regional dialog in the framework of the European Union and shaping the Central-European cultural identity. We have a vested interest in seizing this opportunity.

In the year 2003 Poland assumes chairmanship of the Central European Initiative. This will be an occasion to elaborate on the present forms of activities of this institution and to promote Polish experiences in the fields of transformation and democratization, as well as cross-border and inter-regional cooperation. We would also like to make use of our chairmanship to initiate a deeper reflection on the future of the Initiative.

Honorable Members,

It is our intention to intensify our policy in our Eastern neighborhood. After all we are not acceding to the European Union in order to turn our back on our Eastern partners. On the contrary, we want to treat the achievements of our relations with Eastern Europe as one of our major assets inside the European Union. We would like to use our membership to give new impetus to the development in the whole region. Therefore we promulgate the concept of devising the "Eastern Dimension" of the Union. Recently I have presented to the Presidency certain specific ruminations and suggestions, aiming at the intensification of the support lent by the European Union to the transformation processes within the structures of our Eastern neighbors, including the ones concerning the European Democracy Fund, European Peace Corps, or connected with setting in motion of a special European Scholarship Program.

Poland has always supported the European orientation in the policy of our neighbors. We do not confine our role to the "bridge" formula. What we want is to be good advocates of the region and of Europe's enlargement eastwards.

We put great emphasis on the strategic partnership between the Union and Russia, which would be based on the values of European civilization and the common political and economic interests. We are gratified that the Middle European region is treated in the Russian policy as an entity of international status, as a value in itself. It is the achievement of the incumbent Government to have effected a radical improvement of climate in our relations with Russia. We maintain high intensity of political relations, we are searching for new possibilities of economic cooperation. We also discuss sensitive issues in a business-like manner. We sense far-reaching prospects of this cooperation. The Committee for Cooperation Strategy established last year will chart their course and impart to them a more concrete dimension. Its

next session will take place soon. Polish - Russian relations are becoming more and more transparent thanks to the fact that over the last years it has been possible to dispel some specters of the past which cast a pall of a stolid power of stereotypes over these relations. We hope that the Forum for Polish - Russian Dialog will enable further progress in this respect.

The strategic partnership between Poland and Ukraine has stood the test of time and faces positive prospect for the future. Poland will act to infuse this partnership with specific content of joint projects and undertakings. We will continue to endorse Ukraine in multilateral contacts, especially with Western states and institutions, hoping that the Ukrainian side will confirm through them its credibility as a partner. Over the recent months Poland has contributed substantially to sustaining the dialog between Ukraine and the European Union. An event of special significance was the conference "Ukraine in Europe" held in October 2002 in Warsaw, attended by the representatives of the authorities and opposition groupings of Ukraine, as well as high-ranking representatives of the European Union and its member states.

We believe that Ukraine's declaration stating that its target objective was to become a member of the European Union deserves to be appreciated by Brussels. We will lend our support to Ukraine's endeavors to conclude the association agreement. It requires for Kiev to consistently implement free-market mechanisms and European Union legislative standards. This concerns also acting in accordance with the rules of democracy, human rights, rule of law and freedom of speech in pursuing politics.

Our relations with Belarus are guided by the principle of good-neighborliness. We fully share the premises which underlay the restrictions of the European Union and the USA towards the members of the Belarussian leadership. Our specific neighborly contacts have called for a different approach and it was understood properly. Our goal is to promote, despite obvious obstacles, Belarussian independence, democracy, economic reforms and pro-European tendencies.

The "Eastern Dimension" of the European Union should also encompass supporting reforms in Moldova.

It remains of consequence to achieve stabilization in the regions of Caucasus and Transcaucasia - the strategic peripheries of the "wide" Europe. Polish diplomats and military personnel have traditionally participated in the international efforts in that region. We hope especially that peace will return to Chechnya through dialog and reconciliation.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members,

On becoming a member of the European Union, Poland will be ever more distinctly perceived not only as a player on the regional and sub-regional scene, but also as a participant of the global process, which is a consequence of the increasing global commitment of the European Union. We are well aware of the fact that our accession to the European Union will widen the horizons of our policy, will induct Poland into the circle of numerous new global issues. Poland will be increasingly involved in

addressing them. It brings with itself considerable benefits, especially economic ones, as well as the increase in the political authority and cultural attractiveness. However, it can at the same time encompass challenges resulting from perceiving Poland as a country belonging to the "Northern" block, connected with the expectations that Poland will contribute more to development assistance.

The history of Poland as a country that has never been a colonial empire, and instead was subjugated for centuries to foreign domination, as well as our traditions commanding tolerance and respect for other cultures and denominations - all this makes Poland apposite to act constructively in the contacts between North and South. We favor the dialog between civilizations. We will make our contribution to assistance activities, ensuring that they serve modernizing transformations in the countries that need this assistance, that they advance their democratization and good governance. We want to be more active in marking our presence in the international debate on the issues of globalization, sustainable development, environmental protection, social problems. The chairmanship by President Aleksander Kwasniewski of the session of one of the round tables at the Johannesburg Summit was a momentous fact.

Poland will, as far as possible, intensify its economic, political, and cultural activities in the regions beyond Europe. Already now, despite the obvious focus on the European issues, we have managed to demonstrate that we highly value this facet of our policy. We would like to constructively mark our own identity in rebuilding far-off relations, against the background of the common EU position in non-European issues, using the fact of our membership of the Union to develop them. In this way we want to balance the present European mainstream in our policy.

We have numerous ties with non-European countries strengthened in our distant and our more recent history - including with more distant countries. We intend to base cooperation and dialog with the Middle East countries on this very nexus, making use of the activism of our diplomatic service. We are very much interested in the reconstruction of our economic bond with the countries of the Middle East (e.g. Iran) and Central Asia (e.g. Afghanistan) and in the development and balancing of trade with the countries of the Far East (especially China and Japan). Among other things, during the visit of the Prime Minister of Malaysia last year, new prospects opened up for economic relations with South and South - East Asia. There are also opportunities for us to take more intense action on other continents, including Latin America and Australia, where the Polish Community (Polonia) can be of assistance. Africa merits greater attention in our policy. It is a continent deeply afflicted by stagnation and social calamities. However, several African states remain important potential partners of cooperation.

Honorable Members!

The events of September 11, 2001 have made us aware of importance of the global context in our policy. Poland has committed itself vigorously to the antiterrorist campaign and intends to sustain its dedication, for this involves the threats that can be of direct concern also to us. It also goes for the issue of nonproliferation of weapons

of mass destruction. Our major contribution to the prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has been our chairmanship of the Missile Technology Control Regime. It is a substantial achievement of the Polish diplomacy.

I do not have to assure you, that we follow attentively the development of the situation around Iraq. The full implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1441 is of paramount importance for the success of attempts to contain proliferation and stabilize the situation in the Middle East and Central Asia. It is with concern that we receive signals pointing at the gaps and inconsistencies in the Iraqi declarations concerning the armaments programs. We are awaiting the complete report of the international inspectors that is to be soon submitted to the UN Security Council. We believe that a gross violation of the 1441 Resolution by Iraq would call for a resolute response. Poland is ready to support it. We still believe that the problems can be solved by peaceful means. Armed action needs to be treated as the last resort, but one needs to take its necessity into account.

The statements of the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea concerning its withdrawal from the nonproliferation regime have aroused our concerns. We believe that it is possible to reverse the negative course of events and avoid destabilization of the region.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members,

Due to new threats, the international environment is characterized by a large degree of volatility and unpredictability. It is caused by the consequences of the processes of globalization and fragmentation in the contemporary world. We are still unable to cope with the problems of poverty, social exclusion, infectious diseases, homelessness. The lack of plausible solutions to these challenges adversely affects the fragile stability of the whole international system. The uncertainty as to the directions of development is aggravated by a distinct economic downturn in some regions, as well as by the upsurge in the number of weak, "failed" states and non-state players whose impact on the condition of the international environment continues to increase. The fact that democracy is in short supply, the existence of persecutions, the absence of respect for human rights, corruption and malgovernance are a source of tensions and problems.

The old, bipolar system has definitely collapsed, but a new system of global security has not yet been completely molded. There exist no great project, no scheme, on which the new order could be based. The discussions on how many poles there are and how many there should be in the international system will be of no avail. The new system will be created irrespective of such debates. What is important is that its overarching concept should be the fundamental values of our civilization - human rights, democracy, rule of law, market economy, social justice, tolerance. It is these values that should be our compass in the search of structural solutions, in the construction of the response to the current challenges.

The existing international organizations will be put to a serious test of usefulness in the new circumstances. A lot of them, including the UN - in the global scale, and the

OSCE - in the regional scale, may diminish in importance, unless they undergo the indispensable transformation. Poland will advocate the strengthening of multilateral instruments and their broader use.

This was my guiding thought which spurred me to put forward on the forum of the UN a proposal to work out a document which - without seeking to revise the UN Charter - would open the prospect of passing a Political Act tailored to the new tendencies and circumstances typical of the 21 century. The focus would be put mainly on developing or working out new principles of UN activities in the dimensions of effective multilateralism, correlation between the UN and regional organizations according to the principle of subsidiarity and the cooperation of the UN system with the non-state international entities such as non-governmental organizations or transnational corporations. It is not a momentary initiative. It needs to be seen in a longer perspective.

Honorable Members!

We realize that the uncertainty as to the development of economic situation in the world will influence the effectiveness of the Polish foreign policy. The revival of economy expected in the second half of the year 2002 in the countries that are our main economic partners did not come about, whereas the forecast for the year 2003 is less optimistic than previously expected. This underlines the need for the economization of our activities abroad. It is not a fugitive slogan. Our accession to the European Union makes this necessity even more pressing. The efficiency of our state and the momentum of economic development will be the major factors affecting our position in the Union. Each percentage point in our economic development will be reflected in the real possibilities of influencing the course of events in our vicinity.

The Polish diplomatic service will continue to be active in getting involved in the Polish foreign economic policy, in endorsing pro-export activities and attracting foreign capital and investments. We will prepare ourselves to actively address the issues of international economic policy, within whose zone of influence we will be brought by our membership of the European Union. According to the Economic Strategy of the Government: Entrepreneurship-Development-Work, we will focus our pro-export activities in our trade policy on chosen markets. Among them are our partners from the European Union, the CEFTA member states, North America, China, Japan, Russia, several countries.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members,

Our accession to the European Union will raise anew the question of our image abroad. We would like the Polish strand, our own identity to be clearly discernible in the collective image of Europe. We want Poland to call to mind the best possible connotations. This requires modernization and intensification of our promotion activities.

We will develop the instruments of public diplomacy. The Polish diplomacy will favor the development of non-governmental forms of social dialog with our foreign partners. The ties to the scientific resources of the Polish diplomacy will be developed. An important direction of promotion activities will be making good use of our assets in the field of culture, and the lobbying of the Polonia, next to political and economic activities. We would also like to promote the Polish science abroad better than we have done so far.

The Governmental Program of Cooperation with the Polonia and Poles Living Abroad adopted over a month ago, will be implemented in the year 2003. Special emphasis has been put in it on among others initiatives addressed to the younger generations of the Polonia, contacts with eminent personalities of Polish descent and extending the involvement of the Polonia in the development of economic cooperation with abroad. Greater assistance will be granted to institutions implementing tasks connected to supporting the cultural and educational activities of the Polonia, including financial assistance to the Houses of Culture or libraries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the Ministry of National Education and Sports will strive to expand the scope of teaching Polish and teaching in schools abroad using the Polish language. They will try to include it in the local educational systems and to encourage the Polonia youth to learn this language. The endeavors to initiate cooperation with eminent Polonia entrepreneurs in the creation of a network of economic ties to the countries of their residence and the promotion of Polish economic potential will be continued. Assistance to Poles in the East will occupy a special place on the agenda. We would like to grant it inter alia by extending scholarship assistance, lending wider support to providing Polonia institutions and organizations in the East with modern technical equipment. We also intend to urge the Polonia organizations in the West to develop manifold forms of assistance to the Poles living in the East.

The activities aimed at the further streamlining of our consular service will be continued, and for now - activities directed at coping with the increased burdens of the visa regime in the East.

Honorable Members,

Our entrance into the European Union will make us an integral part of a zone of civilizational progress, prosperity, security. It will discard many geographical and economic threats. However, it will not diminish the number of dilemmas that our foreign policy must resolve. Nothing in the present world is given once and for all. Therefore we must precisely define our interests, the place we would like to occupy in the Union, our own identity that we would like to protect, the profile of our commitment in the region and the world at large. There is a lot of commotion in the European and global politics. Let us set for ourselves ambitious, but realistic goals and let us strive to achieve them consistently, gaining strength from the efficient country whose organs are healthy and whose economy is sound, basing our foreign policy on the possibly widest national consensus. I hope that the vision of policy that I have presented will be approved by all of you.

Thank you for your attention.